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ABSTRACT

An outstanding physical education program usually enjoys the support of the community, and this support will, in turn, enhance the program. It is the responsibility of the physical education teacher and supervisor to develop community support for his program through various public relations efforts. Because students are the primary interface between a school program and the public, it is important that the physical education teacher establish a good relationship with his students. A goal-oriented program and the enthusiasm of students are the primary public relations tools of the physical education teacher and supervisor. Another important method of gaining public support is through the mass media--newspapers, radio, and TV. Reports of programs and the accomplishment of their objectives are interesting and desirable news in most communities. A third way of promoting school physical education programs is through demonstrations and exhibitions of physical education activities, which have been found to draw approximately three adults for each pupil participant. Exhibitions can be demonstrations by a single school or competitions among schools in a city, county, or school district. (HMD)

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Interpreting PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Suggestions for Teachers and Supervisors

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Interpreting PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Suggestions for Teachers and Supervisors

During the past 10 years Council staff members have observed physical education programs in hundreds of schools in all 50 States. Outstanding programs, good programs, average programs, and inadequate programs. The programs rated "outstanding" and "good" usually enjoy strong community support. Usually, but not always.

Most good programs seem to have public support not merely because they are good, but because the dedicated individuals who run them feel a responsibility to "sell" their programs to their various audiences: students, fellow faculty members, the school administration, and parents. In other words, even the most able physical educator must, like everyone else, "blow his own horn" to get attention.

We are not suggesting that teachers ignore program quality to concentrate on salesmanship. We are suggesting they recognize that community support is not an automatic result of good programs. It must be conscientiously developed and cultivated. This pamphlet contains suggestions for telling physical education's story more effectively.

THE STUDENT AS 'SALESMAN'

Effective public relations begins with a good relationship between the teacher and his students. There are no better salesmen for physical education than students who understand and enjoy their experiences in physical education; students who relate what they do in class to personal health, performance and appearance; students who learn useful skills; or students who see positive changes in themselves as a result of physical education activities.

Even students who appear to be non-competitive are interested in their own improvement and will recall a few years later that they broke six minutes in the mile run or did 11 pullups during physical fitness testing. To help assure favorable experiences for all students, the teacher should

emphasize competition against self. One way of keeping students aware of their progress is to time or measure all performances involving running, swimming, jumping, challenge courses, etc. More than most subjects, physical education can offer the student tangible evidence of his improvement.

The enthusiastic teacher can communicate his enthusiasm to the student. Students appreciate the kind of planning, organization and leadership which gets maximum benefit from the limited time available. One high school boy expressed a favorable attitude toward physical education when he remarked: "Mr. Jones means business. He runs his physical education class the same way he runs football practice."

Parental attitudes toward physical education are largely derived from student attitudes. A chance remark at the dinner table about a teacher who is obese and can't demonstrate skills, or a comment on lack of organization and goals, can be devastating to program support. On the other hand, a parent who hears that his child is making fitness gains, or who hears that "we learned this today" instead of "we played that today," has an immeasurably better opinion of physical education.

Experience indicates that most persons seriously question the value of physical education programs which are largely recreational play. Programs which produce gains in knowledge, skill and physical fitness are much more likely to receive support.

PUBLICIZING THE PROGRAM

The mass communications media - newspapers, radio and TV - offer many opportunities for enhancing physical education's image and cultivating support. Again, programs which are achievement- or goal-oriented have a big advantage over recreational type programs. The number and names of students winning Presidential Physical Fitness Awards, or a comparison of local fitness scores with State and national averages, are news in most communities. So are reports on programs which serve the handicapped and retarded, or programs which teach useful skills such as swimming and drown-proofing.

It usually is helpful to assign responsibility for program publicity to a staff member with interest and aptitude in the activity. All releases should be coordinated with school and/or district public information

officers, since they may have additional resources and contacts which will be useful.

Periodic reports to the Principal, Superintendent and Board are another means of interpreting the physical education program. Others include leaflets (explaining the scope and objectives of the program) which students take home to parents; photographic displays in window space provided by local merchants; interesting pictures and charts posted on school bulletin boards; display boards (in school gymnasiums or trophy cases) listing physical fitness record-holders; and color slides or movie film for use in presentations to PTA's, service clubs, fraternal organizations, etc.

An opportunity often overlooked by the physical educator is the local radio or TV "talk show." Such shows are an excellent forum for detailed discussions, and physical education has many friends in medicine—pediatricians, orthopedists, cardiologists, psychiatrists, etc.—who can contribute to interesting and informative presentations.

EXHIBITIONS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

Physical education still is widely misunderstood. Many older persons never participated in a formal physical education program. Other adults, such as those who are poorly coordinated, or those who were victims of lackadaisical teachers, may have bad memories of their physical education experiences. Regular exhibitions and demonstrations can help acquaint these persons with the scope, objectives and methods of the physical education program and thereby correct any false impressions that exist.

Exhibitions at school assemblies and at the intermissions of athletic events are perhaps the best means of reaching the administration, fellow faculty members and students. Special "days" or "nights," which may be conducted by a single school, or on a city-wide or district-wide basis, are effective for taking the message to the public. On April 13, 1972 the Norfolk, Virginia, City Schools conducted a special Physical Education Night involving 1,500 pupils and 86 teachers from 70 schools. More than 12,000 persons jammed into the community's new sports arena to watch 20 major activities, and one of them called it "the most impressive exhibition I've ever seen."

The Council recommends that each secondary school conduct at least one demonstration annually, apart from the usual Back to School Night. Since experience indicates that such demonstrations attract approximately three adult spectators for each student participant, it is important to involve as many students as is practical.

Following are five examples of demonstrations which schools or districts are using to tell their stories effectively.

1. Sports-A-Rama (single high school)

   The program described here is presented by the boys' physical education department and annually attracts a capacity crowd. Donations collected during the event are used to assist in the purchase of physical education supplies and equipment.

   Competing teams are formed by the four grades of the school. Seniors are identified by their green trunks; Juniors, gold; Sophomores, blue; and Freshmen, red. Teams are judged according to precision and appearance in marching on and off the floor and during the warmup. First is awarded 50 points; second, 30 points; third, 20 points; and fourth, 10 points. Decoration of their assigned sections of the bleachers by classes is awarded: first, 100 points; second, 60 points; third, 40 points; fourth, 20 points. Cheering and enthusiasm of classes is awarded: first, 100 points; second, 60 points; third, 40 points; fourth, 20 points. Activities in their 1-hour, 45-minute program are:

7:30-7:35	*Grand March and Warmup* .	All classes
7:35-7:40	*Sports-A-Rama Song*	Song leaders
7:40-7:45	*Volleyball* ..... (10 points)	Seniors vs Juniors (6 men on a team)
7:45-7:48	*Wheelbarrow Relay* ..... (10 points)	Sophomores vs Juniors (8 men on a team)
7:48-7:51	*Basketball Relay* ..... (10 points)	Seniors vs Sophomores (8 men on a team)
7:51-7:54	*Knee Basketball* ..... (10 points)	Juniors vs Sophomores (3 men on a team)
7:54-7:57	*Standing Jump Relay* ..... (10 points)	Freshmen vs Sophomores (8 men on a team)
7:57-8:00	*Tumbling Relay* ..... (10 points)	Seniors vs Freshmen (8 men on a team)

8:00-8:05	*Tug of War*	All Classes (40 men on a team)
	Single Elimination. Freshmen vs Juniors, Sophomores vs Seniors	
8:05-8:08	*Dizzy Izzy Relay* ..... (10 points)	Seniors vs Sophomores (8 men on a team)
8:08-8:11	*Sack Race* ..... (10 points)	Freshmen vs Juniors (8 men on a team)
8:11-8:14	*Crab Race* ..... (10 points)	Seniors vs Freshmen (8 men on a team)
8:14-8:19	*Push Ball* ..... (10 points)	Juniors vs Seniors (8 men on a team)
8:19-8:22	*Barrel Relay* ..... (10 points)	Freshmen vs Sophomores (8 men on a team)
8:22-8:25	*Stroke-the-Boat Race* .... (10 points)	Juniors vs Freshmen (8 men on a team)
8:25-8:35	*Pyramid Building* ..... Judged on organization, difficulty, achievement and number of students used. 1st-100 points; 2nd-60 points; 3rd-40 points; Entry-20 points.	All Classes
8:35-8:55	*Individual Contests* ..... 1st-10 points; 2nd-6 points; 3rd-4 points; Entry-2 points.	All Classes
8:35-8:45	*Group A*	Weight Lifting Tire Wrestle Bulldog Pull Tumbling Rope Climbing
8:45-8:55	*Group B*	Indian Wrestle Free Throws Bar Dips Elbow Wrestle Pullups
8:55-9:10	*Obstacle Race* ..... 1st-50 points; 2nd-40 points; 3rd-30 points; Entry-20 points	All Classes
9:10-9:15	*Presentation of Sports-A-Rama Trophy by Principal*	

2. Physical Education Night (11 high schools)

This demonstration, staged in a college gymnasium, involves approximately 400 students and attracts an average of 2,000 adults.

Calisthenics	Girls and Boys
Folk Dances in Native Costumes	Girls
Relays (Circular and Shuttle)	Boys
Tumbling and Gymnastics	Girls and Boys
Modern Dance	Girls
Circuit Courses	Boys
Agility Response Drills	Boys

3. Tribute to Physical Education (school district)

Approximately 800 students and 50 teachers participate in a 90-minute program which draws up to 3,000 spectators.

Prelude – High school band.

Presentation of Colors – AFROTC.

Introduction of dignitaries and members of district board of education by Coordinator of Physical Education.

Introductory remarks by State Physical Education personnel.

Description of demonstrations and narration during activities by District Consultant in Physical Education and State Physical Education Chief.

Demonstrations (Elementary Schools):

Gymnastics (Primary)	Creative Rhythms
Ball Handling Skills	Circuit Training
Balance Beam	Movement Exploration
Vaulting Box	Gymnastics (Intermediate)
Grass Drills	Parachute Play
Astronaut Drills	Stretch Ropes
Physical Fitness Development	Special Education Techniques
German Free Movement	Folk and Square Dancing

Demonstrations (Secondary School Girls):

Junior High – Free Exercise, Tumbling
Junior High – Modern Gymnastics

Junior High – Modern Dance, Aerial Tennis
Junior High – Jump Rope
High School – Gymnastics Apparatus, Circuit Training
High School – Golf, Badminton

Demonstrations (Secondary School Boys):

Junior High – Pre-Tennis
Junior High – Rope Climbing, Tumbling
Junior High – Wrestling, Handball
Junior High – Physical Fitness Testing
High School – Gymnastics Apparatus, Physical Fitness Conditioning
High School – Weight Training, Archery

4. Sports-A-Rama (citywide)

This program, involving 1,200 fourth, fifth and sixth grade pupils, attracts a Sunday afternoon crowd of 3,800. The following five individual events are run off simultaneously:

25 yard dash	Reach and jump	Pullups
Rope climb	Standing broad jump	

Each youngster is limited to one event. Three team events are run off in heats of three teams each. In the shuttle relay, obstacle relay, and tug-of-war, teams are composed of two boys and two girls. Each team member, in succession, completes these activities in the obstacle relay:

Run 25 yards
Climb through an automobile tire
Walk a balance beam
Climb over a 5' Swedish vaulting box
Hurdle a 2' crossbar
Climb a 15' rope
Reverse the entire course.

The tug-of-war team is composed of three boys and three girls.

Among the 50 adults who assist in the meet's administration are coaches from all of the junior and senior high schools, which improves working relationships between elementary specialists and secondary school personnel.

5. Sports-A-Rama (all county schools)

The demonstration described here, which is conducted in a college gymnasium, involves 500 elementary and secondary school students.

7:30-7:33 Sports-A-Rama Song
7:33-7:43 Calisthenics
7:43-7:46 Physical Performance Test
7:46-8:00

Court	Game	Court	Game
1	Netball	5	Deck tennis
2	Semi-volleyball	6	Volleyball
3	Volley tennis	7	Paddle tennis
4	Pushball	8	Badminton

8:00-8:05 Body Mechanics (Posture)
8:05-8:10 Crossfire (dodgeball game)
8:10-8:15 Scrimmage (basketball leadup game)
8:15-8:18 Passball (football leadup game)
8:18-8:21 Pushball
8:21-8:35 Dance and Basic Rhythms
Primary (fundamentals and creative)
Intermediate (folk and contra)
Upper grades (social)
8:35-8:40 Rope Climbing
8:40-8:50 Base Games (baseball leadup games)
Primary - Homeball
Intermediate - Kickball and teeball
8:50-8:56 The Dance
Intermediate (Interpretive)
High School (Modern)
8:56-9:05 "Rasslin" and Wrestling
9:06-9:30 Tumbling and Trampolining

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